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B Cochran*

[Vol III, p. -] R
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INQUIRY INTO THE TESTIMONY OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

VOLUME III INTERVIEWS

FEBRUARY 1978

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**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR & AUDITOR
U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

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INQUIRY INTO THE TESTIMONY OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

VOLUME III - INTERVIEWS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Page</u>
Clifford V. Smith, Jr.	1
Robert F. Burnett	7
Gerald Page	11
Roger J. Mattson	17
John G. Davis	27
William A. Anders, former Chairman	29
Kenneth R. Chapman	40
Peter L. Strauss	43
Bryan Eagle	48
C. W. Reamer	53
Marcus A. Rowden, former Chairman	60
Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.	65
George W. McCorkle	70
Robert A. Erickson	72
Paul F. Goldberg	75
Ben Huberman	78
L. D. Y. Ong	82
Kenneth S. Pedersen	106
Bernard J. Snyder	109
Joseph M. Hendrie, Chairman	113
Frederick L. Crane	117
Thomas F. Carter, Jr./Thomas C. Thayer	121
Joseph J. Fouchard	122
William J. Dircks	135
Richard T. Kennedy, Commissioner	137
Lee V. Gossick	145
Carl Builder	159
Edward Mason, former Commissioner	164
<u>Carl Duckett</u>	176
Victor Gilinsky, Commissioner	180
James H. Conran	199

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information. They had other information such as a type of bombing practice done with A-4 aircraft that would not have made sense unless it was to deliver a nuclear bomb.

By the time of the NRC briefing the question of whether U-235 had been diverted from NUMEC was academic for the CIA because plutonium from the Dimona reactor was believed to be available. Therefore, from the CIA's intelligence point of view the diversion did not matter. The last inspection of Dimona was in 1969. In his view it was less than an adequate investigation to determine whether plutonium was there. Afterwards Israel refused to permit inspections. Furthermore, a shipment of 200 tons of non-enriched uranium from Argentina had been diverted to Israel through a West German cut out.

Mr. Duckett raised the question of whether the U.S. had intentionally allowed material to go to Israel. He said that if any such scheme was under consideration, he would have known about it and he never heard so much as a rumor about this. He, therefore, does not believe there is any substance to this allegation. In support of this view, he related that CIA had drafted a National Intelligence Estimate on Israel's nuclear capability in 1968. In it was the conclusion that the Israelis had nuclear weapons. He showed it to Mr. Helms. Helms told him not to publish it and he would take it up with President Johnson. Mr. Helms later related that he had spoken to the President, that the President was concerned, and that he had said "Don't tell anyone else, even Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara."

Mr. Duckett was asked about the reactions of NRC officials who were present at his briefing. He said that Mr. Anders was very concerned and felt that already too many people had been exposed to the information. After the briefing Mr. Duckett went to Mr. Kennedy's office. Mr. Kennedy wanted to talk about more frequent interchange of information between the NRC and the CIA. Mr. Anders came in and wanted to apologize for having so many people present. He said he did not realize how sensitive the information was and if he had he would have restricted the attendance even more. Mr. Anders said that, in the future, he should deal only with Mr. Kennedy and him, and that in light of the sensitive nature of the information he was going to go to the White House. During this session, Mr. Duckett recalls that one Commissioner, probably Mr. Mason, commented with mock jocularity "My God, I almost went to work for Zal Shapiro. I came close to taking a job with him." By the end of the meeting it was a pretty somber group. Mr. Duckett does not recall that the staff actively participated in the briefing. He pointed out that it was not a formal briefing. It was more of a discussion for the whole session.